

Editorial

The present issue of *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* closes the seventh year of the existence of the journal. It is fully warranted to say that 2017 has been yet another successful year for at least three reasons. First, the number of submissions has increased considerably and so has their quality with the effect that *SSLT* has become even more established in the field. Second, and closely related to the previous point, the number of downloads of individual papers has been on the rise as well, which must have translated into in the growing number of citations, a metric that is illustrative of the impact the journal is having in the field. Third, we have finally managed to move *SSLT* to an electronic platform, with the entire process of submitting, reviewing, processing, editing and proofing papers being handled by the PRESSto publishing system maintained by Adam Mickiewicz University. The transition could not have come at a better time as dealing with the growing influx of submissions was becoming less and less manageable, which was beginning to constitute a threat to the credibility of the journal. I am hopeful that the move to the new platform, with all of its useful functionalities, will not only result it more speedy and efficient processing of the submissions, but will also make it easier for us to find the most suitable reviewers and even further enhance the visibility of *SSLT* and its impact in the domain of research in learning and teaching foreign languages.

The issue brings together six papers, all of which report the findings of empirical investigations dealing with different aspects of learning foreign and second languages and the instructional practices intended to foster this process. In the first of these, Emily E. Scida and Jill N. Jones report the results of a study that sought to determine the influence of contemplative practices on foreign language anxiety, affect, self-efficacy, classroom climate, and language learning outcomes in the case of students enrolled in an advanced intermediate Spanish language course at a university in the USA. Using questionnaires, interviews with some of the participants and test results, they demonstrated that regular use of

such contemplative practices as breath mediation, gratitude writing, or vision-, goal- and intention-setting, led to the promotion of more positive affect, better classroom climate and superior learning outcomes, operationalized as course grades. In the second contribution, Katarzyna Zychowicz, Adriana Biedroń and Mirosław Pawlak discuss the process of constructing and validating the Polish Listening Span, intended as a measure of the central executive, one of the components of working memory hypothesized by Baddeley and Hitch (1974) and Baddeley (2000), in the Polish context. In the following contribution, Fang-Yu Liao focuses on the role of poetry in the development of writing skills of 18 international students enrolled in TESOL programs in the USA. Using hierarchical cluster analysis, she categorized the participants into five groups characterized by different writing experiences, also showing that associating writing primarily with grammar and structure led to lower self-evaluation of poetry writing abilities. Gloria Vickov and Eva Jakupčević subsequently shift the focus to the teacher, reporting the results of a study that explored the use and distribution of selected discourse markers by six Croatian teachers of English at the primary and secondary school levels with the help of audio-recordings and transcripts of two classes that each of them taught. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis, the authors demonstrated that the repertoire of the most frequently used discourse markers is quite limited and they mainly serve the purpose of managing classroom activities and organizing classroom discourse, with no differences being observed between elementary and secondary school. The last two papers are devoted to issues involved in the learning and teaching of foreign languages by young learners. In the first of these, Vanessa De Wilde and June Eyckmans focus on the role of incidental learning of English by 30 Flemish children, 11 years of age. The analysis of the data collected by means of the Cambridge English Test for Young Learners, tapping all the language skills, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (Dunn & Dunn, 2007), as well as questionnaires filled out by children and their parents, showed that, despite the lack of formal instruction, the majority of the participants represented the A2 level according to the *Common European Framework for Languages*, a finding that was attributed to abundant contact with the media and in particular computer games. In the second, Gabriela Hild analyzes the ways in which a Hungarian teacher evaluated her five students who were 12-13 years of age. The analysis of the data derived from interviews, class observations and performance on speaking tasks demonstrated that the experienced teacher failed to adjust assessment procedures to the age of her learners with respect to testing procedures and the ways of providing feedback. I am confident that the six papers will serve as an impetus for further empirical investigations and the two reviews also included in the present issue of SLLT will encourage readers

to get to know more about assessment techniques and causes of demotivation in the foreign language classroom.

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